



Diocese of Palm Beach

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Office of
THE BISHOP

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October 5, 2008

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:

Today is Respect Life Sunday which marks the beginning of the Respect Life Program for the year 2008-2009. The national theme for this year's program is *Hope and Trust in Life*.

When our Holy Father visited our nation in April, the theme of his apostolic visit was *Christ Our Hope*. Christ is our hope because it is Christ who gives life and the fullness of life. We hear so many cries in our society for a renewed hope in the future. Respect for life and hope go hand in hand. When respect for life is lost, hope is undermined.

I thank all of you for your efforts to promote a culture of life within our society. Especially during the upcoming election, we must do all we can to insure the promotion of this culture within our society. We have a grave moral obligation to support positions, agendas and legislation that protect and enhance the gift of life from the moment of conception until natural death. There is no greater issue than that of life, its protection and its enhancement.

In our Diocese, I would encourage you to participate in the local efforts supporting the *National 40 Days for Life* from September 24 to November 2, 2008, as well as the *Walk a mile and Save a child* event on October 18 at Emmanuel Church, which will benefit Birthline/Lifeline, an agency of Catholic Charities. For more information on these events, please contact our Respect Life Office (561) 775-9565.

On this Respect Life Sunday, let us renew our efforts, as our Holy Father asks us, to be unrelenting in our efforts to provide a culture that respects life through our actions, our prayers and our example. Let us continue to do all we can to end abortion in our nation. Let us be informed about matters such as embryonic stem cell research, the right to ordinary means to preserve life including nutrition and hydration, proper care for the disabled, the elderly and the infirm and the death penalty. Let us raise our voices in instructing others and making our moral convictions known especially as responsible voting citizens.

As we hope and rejoice in life, may we never hesitate to put our convictions into action. Let us make our society truly one that can hope because it respects the greatest gift of all, that of life.

With the assurance of my prayers and every best wish, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Gerald M. Barbarito
Bishop of Palm Beach

NOTE TO PASTORS:

Please publish this letter in the parish bulletin or have it read at all Masses during the weekend of October 4/5